

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 CAIRO 09876 220959Z

11
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
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Z 220940Z JUL 76
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 5441

S E C R E T CAIRO 9876

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, AEMR, US, LE
SUBJECT: BEIRUT EVACUATION

DEPT PASS SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

REF: STATE 181222 (TOSEC 190013)

1. SINCE BOTH SADAT AND FAHMY ARE STILL IN ALEXANDRIA, I MET WITH MUHAMMED RIAD AS SOON AS HE GOT INTO THE OFFICE THIS MORNING TO GIVE HIM PRESIDENT FORD'S MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT SADAT ON THE BEIRUT EVACUATION. I ASKED THAT HE GET IT TO SADAT IMMEDIATELY.

2. AFTER READING THE MESSAGE, RIAD SAID HE WISHED TO MAKE ONE OBSERVATION. SEELYE HAD TOLD METWALLI ABOUT THE PLO'S REFUSAL TO GUARANTEE THE JULY 21 CONVOY. UPON CHECKING WITH PLO, METWALLI HAD CONCLUDED THAT PLO GENUINELY CONCERNED ABOUT THE SECURITY OF THE NABATIYA AREA AND HAD SO REPORTED TO GOE. I POINTED OUT TO RIAD THAT WHAT WE ARE NOW TALKING ABOUT IS SOMETHING THAT HAS COME UP SINCE THAT TIME. WHEN PLO SECURITY REP TOLD EMBASSY BEIRUT SECURITY REP THAT JULY 21 CONVOY COULD NOT BE GUARANTEED BECAUSE OF INSECURITY IN NABATIYA AREA, HE HAD ADDED THIS SHOULD BE TAKEN CARE OF IN TWO OR THREE DAYS. ON BASIS OF THIS STATEMENT, WE HAD RESCHEDULED CONVOY FOR JUNE 24, I.E. , THREE DAYS LATER. IN A TALK WITH PLO REP HELD YESTERDAY TO CONFIRM JUNE 24 CONVOY,

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 CAIRO 09876 220959Z

PLO HAD REFUSED TO GUARANTEE CONVOY, GIVING AS ALLEGED

REASONS THE POINTS MADE IN THE PRESIDENTIAL LETTER.
NOTHING HAD BEEN SAID ABOUT INSECURITY AT NABATIYA.
IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, AMBASSADOR SEELYE HAD CONCLUDED
THAT PLO IN EFFECT HOLDING CONVOY AS HOSTAGE. HENCE,
THE PRESIDENTIAL LETTER I HAD JUST GIVEN HIM. I EMPHASIZED
TO RIAD THE SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH WE VIEW THIS PROBLEM
AND THAT WE LOOK TO OUR EGYPTIAN FRIENDS TO DO EVERYTHING
IN THEIR POWER TO HELP US RESOLVE IT.

3. RIAD INDICATED HE APPRECIATED SITUATION. HE EXPECTS
FAHMY IN ABOUT ONE HOUR'S TIME AND WILL SHOW THE LETTER
TO FAHMY AS SOON AS LETTER ARRIVES. HE ASSUMES FAHMY
WILL AT ONCE GET IN TOUCH WITH THE PRESIDENT, HOPEFULLY
BEFORE SADAT'S DEPARTURE FROM ALEXANDRIA, TO CONVEY THE
LETTER AND TO TAKE INSTRUCTIONS ON WHAT THE PRESIDENT
WANTS DONE. RIAD SAID WE CAN BE ASSURED THAT THE PRESIDENT
WILL ACT. SADAT HIMSELF IS EXPECTED BACK IN CAIRO SOMETIME
IN THE EARLY AFTERNOON.
EILTS

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NNN

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